

"IPM innovators" Win "Good Bug" Award

(Left) A codling moth trap. (Right) French prunes planted near vineyards attract *Anagrus epos*, a parasite of the grape leafhopper. (Below) Boxes attract owls, which provide rodent control.

In August 1994 the California Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) kicked off an awards program to recognize farming groups, school districts, counties, and others who are finding environmentally friendly ways to fight insects, weeds, and other pests. DPR has given "Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Innovator" awards to 12 groups—including five farming

organizations. One of the first recipients was the Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission, a group of winegrape growers who've adopted Integrated Pest Management systems that are also benefitting wildlife.

In 1991, 600 growers established the *Lodi-Woodbridge Winegrape Commission* and launched a district-wide IPM program to reduce pesticides, particularly in their premium

varietal winegrape production. Most growers have embraced the program and 30 percent are very active participants.

The program focuses on five areas: increased biodiversity in the vineyard, improved soil health, insect monitoring, cultural practices to reduce pests and diseases, and the use of "soft" pesticides.

A walk through many of the vineyards will produce views of clover and other cover crops planted between rows in order to build soil quality and attract beneficial insects. These lush corridors also sustain wildlife. "It's not unusual to see upland game birds, song birds, and snakes living in these planted areas," say winegrape growers Brad and Randy Lange. "A lot of growers are also erecting high-rise 'owl houses' on poles to attract rodent-eating owls to their vineyards."

Other farming winners included the *Randall Island Regional Management Pilot Project* (pears, San Joaquin delta), *California Processed Tomato Foundation*, *Fillmore Citrus Protective District*, and *Biologically Integrated Orchard Systems Project* (almonds, Merced County).

"California has long been a leader in the development and implementation of innovative ways of managing pests," says DPR Director James W. Wells. "One of our award winners began using IPM 68 years ago—before it was called IPM."

Innovators are usually voluntary associations using a documented pest management system that can serve as a model for others. DPR is helping innovators locate sources of funding, is providing technical assistance in pest management, and is bringing other interested growers together with innovators to discuss adoption of IPM practices.

